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ABSTRACT

A new paradigm for evaluating school restructuring that is based on the teacher-as-researcher concept, or action research, is presented in this paper. The first section compares the traditional and new evaluation paradigms. The old model is competitive, one-dimensional, reactive, and based on external change agents; it appeals to fear and views the teacher as passive. The new model is cooperative, three-dimensional, responsive, and based on internal change agents; it appeals to inspiration and views the teacher as active. The second section examines problems involved in shifting to the new paradigm. Resistance to change is often based on expectations and past experiences; the questions most often asked by novice evaluators are Who, How, When, and Why? The Learning Laboratory Initiative, a district-level restructuring project, has four goals for evaluation: (1) empower the stakeholders; (2) support the work; (3) showcase what is being learned; and (4) inform policy development. A conclusion is that evaluation for development purposes helps change schools into true learning organizations. Teachers and local shareholders engaged in designing, implementing, and evaluating their educational vision accomplish a shared mission, personal mastery, and team learning. Appendices include a comparison of evaluation paradigms, a description of the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation coordinator, and a figure demonstrating the quartiles of collaborative inquiry. (Contains 22 references.) (LMI)

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DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING: DILEMMAS OF A NEW PARADIGM

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NEA National Center for Innovation

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Documentation and Evaluation of School Restructuring

Dilemmas of a New Paradigm

Introduction

Deming states, "What we need to know tomorrow is both unknown and unknowable." That can be interpreted to mean that those not in the constant state of "knowing" or learning are doomed to mediocrity. Evaluation is the way we grow through reflection upon the discrepancy between what we invisioned and what actually occurred. Consequently, we must plan, we must document, and we must reflect (evaluate) in order to learn..

Pat Dolan, a highly respected organizational development specialist, suggests that the only reasons for evaluation is for the system to learn or for the individual to learn. This suggests the adoption of a new paradigm of evaluation which requires full and deep participation by the learner (whether student, teacher, or system).

Contrasting the "Old" and "New" Evaluation Paradigms (Appendix A)

Ownership. Teachers, because they are closest to the learning process, must take ownership of its study (Goodlad, 1984). Teacher ownership of school change is the basic tenant of site-based, shared decision making; this, in turn, translates to worker empowerment which is a vital component of quality in school restructuring/ transformation (Barth, 1990; Bolin & Falk, 1987; Lieberman, 1986). Shared decisions and governance are in direct opposition to top-down, outside-in changes which characterized the first wave of school change (Lieberman, 1988).

Terrance Deal (cited in Holly, 1990) says that "excellence or improvement cannot be installed or mandated from outside it must be developed from within. It must arise from collective conversations, behaviors and spirit among teachers, administrators, students, and parents within a local school community." Such "collective conversations, behaviors and spirit among teachers" are integral parts of the emerging paradigm of evaluation for restructuring settings.

When referring to a new or emerging evaluation paradigm, I am referring to the teacher-as-researcher (Tikunoff & Mergendoller, 1983), action research (Holly, 1990; Hopkins, 1989; Lieberman, 1988, p. 174-177), naturalistic evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1988), or action sensitive pedagogy (van Manen, 1990) which has been a minor, yet growing, voice in the United States, the United Kingdom, and in Australia for several decades. The significant newness is practitioners' use of this research paradigm as a tool for personal, program, faculty, and organizational development purposes.

Competition versus cooperation. The more traditional or "old" evaluation paradigm tends to focus on individual differences. Frequent judgements of students, teachers, programs, schools, districts, states, and countries are "business as usual" in the old paradigm. Who knows more? Who scores higher? Who's more effective? Which is most efficient? Who's better prepared? A win-lose situation is established: there are a limited number of A's to assign according to the infamous bell-curve.

The term measurement is invariably linked to the word evaluation in the old paradigm and is usually stated first (perhaps to indicate the higher ranking term). Grading and assessment of achievement, determined by one's performance on standardized tests, have created convenient labels such as "under," "over," and "normal" achievers; terms frequently used in the language of the old paradigm. This categorization of people is demoralizing and unproductive, and the labels often become a self-fulfilling prophecy in that low achievement induces low self-esteem which induces low achievement, and round and round it goes (Howell & Dipboye, 1986).

The low achievement, low self-esteem cycle has been shown to repeat itself beyond the K-12 situation into the workplace. In a longitudinal study completed in 1984, Watson and Clark (cited in Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986) found strong

correlations between the affective dispositions of students in their junior and senior high school years and their subsequent job satisfaction at three different periods in their adult life. This study lends evidence to the negative effects of grading, tracking, and labeling -- common practices in the old paradigm.

Such comparisons foster competition rather than cooperation and collegiality which are necessary for systemic and enduring improvements in any work setting, including schools. Our goal should not be who wins, or even who is better, but how much everyone improves from where they are.

Compliance-driven versus generative-driven. The old paradigm for student and curriculum evaluation is compliance-driven -- meaning, performing tasks and repeating information which someone else deems important and valuable for you to know or do. Compliance-driven curriculum and programs are not significantly motivating for the teachers or students they are intended to serve and benefit. What motivation there is through compliance-driven mechanisms are largely driven by fear of failure.

This type of evaluation, which is the driving force behind most curriculum and programs in place in schools, has had minimal impact on educational practices or outcomes. Most educators have little regard for the results of old paradigm evaluations because often they are neither timely nor relevant to their objectives, therefore their usefulness for guiding school and classroom practices has been minimal.

A generative-driven curriculum would, on the other hand, focus on content that would empower students to think, consider alternatives, seek further information, be skillful at problem solving, deepen and expand their interests, be life-long learners, invent new problems, and use basic skills in meaningful ways (McClure & Walters, 1992).

External versus internal. To be congruent with the second wave of educational changes, which originate within the school culture, the evaluation must also emerge from within - that is, it must be internally defined and administered. In contrast, the more traditional evaluation paradigm consists solely of external evaluators monitoring or judging the success of an externally developed and imposed strategy or innovation. Such evaluations are intrusive, daunting, and intimidating. These practices are no longer sufficient, they no longer fit. Accountability must not be to some external agency, but internal to the system.

This is not to say, however, that an external perspective is not valued in the new paradigm. On the contrary, an external perspective of internal work is vital and necessary in a quality organization. W. Edwards Deming, the renowned statistician and management "guru" states unequivocally that "organizations cannot see themselves." Only others see us as we really are; therefore, an external perspective can, in effect, hold a mirror before an organization...not to judge, but to present data and analysis in the spirit of critical friendship (Sagor, 1991). Key differences in the role and relationship of an external evaluator in the new paradigm are: (1) their primary purpose is to assist the site rather than to serve an outside agency, (2) they are chosen in accordance to the needs and inclinations of the project participants, and (3) the data gathered or services rendered are requested and defined by the internal shareholders.

Reactive versus responsive. The currently emerging changes in schools and districts nationwide are more rapid, more comprehensive, more complex, more dramatic, more systemic than ever before; therefore an evaluation paradigm which is responsive to these kinds of transformations is necessary.

For students, more authentic methods of assessment are called for which make allowances for developmental and/or cultural differences among the evaluated - unlike standardized tests - for example: portfolios of work samples,

project development or demonstrations. With authentic assessment, students receive feedback, not just scores, on what is right, what is thoughtful, on progress as well as achievement. Control, prediction, and conformity are not the purposes of the new paradigm...evaluations will no longer feel like a game of "gotcha."

The old evaluation paradigm reacts to a singular, consensual value perspective where the new paradigm is responsive to pluralistic values, partly because it involves the interaction and collaboration among a cross-section of shareholders. Evaluation becomes part of a natural and productive cycle aimed at continuous improvement of the processes and strategies designed to produce learning. Rather than being detached or "added onto the end," evaluation is infused and interactive, it is cyclical rather than linear (Guba & Lincoln, 1988).

In the new paradigm which encourages and embraces interaction around pluralistic values, the possibility of conflict will necessarily arise. This reality will necessitate new structures for new behaviors. We will hear more talk of "conflict utilization" rather than "conflict management" in the emerging paradigm. Teachers will stop viewing conflict in a negative way, and begin viewing it as a catalyst for personal, organizational, and/or professional growth (Lieberman, 1988).

Memorization versus understanding. The old paradigm supported the role of information-provider for the teacher and information-receiver for the student. The singular, all-important reason for teacher/student interaction was to teach the content, so that students could succeed on tests, which would, in turn, attest to the competence of the teacher and/or school and/or district and/or state.

Teachers serving as information-providers is sorely antiquated, and worse, ineffective. In these days of computers, laser disks, and the like, information is voluminous and easily accessible. It is no longer information the student needs, it is understanding. The obsession with the collection and recitation of facts by students

in the old paradigm is being replaced with a goal of knowledge and understanding in the new.

This new goal for students will demand new definitions of student success, will call for new ways to record and describe that success, and will require new methods of reporting progress to parents and others. All these challenges fall under the rubric of "authentic assessment" and are yet another important issue teachers in transformational schools/districts are struggling to change.

If we value and foster understanding for students, doesn't it naturally follow that the school community itself should also seek to understand? Teachers and administrators (individually and together as full faculties) must begin to focus their sights beyond the constant counting that receives so much attention in the old paradigm: absenteeism, tardiness, curricular schedules, time schedules, graduation credits, minutes per period, class size, test scores, and on and on goes the list. Such an obsession with quantification is, in the words of Alfred North Whitehead, "a philosophy of misplaced concreteness" (Whitehead, 1929).

In the old paradigm, the numbers frequently drive the system and are its priorities. The numbers tend to displace the reality you began with, that being the student. The numbers may contribute a glimpse into what you are doing qualitatively, but they cannot provide you a total understanding. Reliance on the numbers alone can be counterproductive and even dangerous. Numbers offer no insights, no resolve to problematic situations; they represent incomplete realities in the new paradigm which seeks to look much deeper - to the very heart of the teaching/learning relationship. The quality of decision making is directly related to the comprehensiveness of the data upon which any decision is based. Making learner decisions based on limited data borders on irresponsible.

In the new paradigm, there is a virtual sea of relevant data which can be collected through a variety of methods including surveys, interviews, reflective

journals, or observations (Sirotnik, 1987). Data gathered by these methods will not merely reveal what students know, but will offer insights into how and why they learned it. Such information is valuable not only for the student's personal growth, but it enables the teacher and the system to learn as well. This information has increased transferability in that it provides new understanding for the teacher who facilitates learning for other students...the teacher becomes a co-learner.

The analysis of such data assists the system in understanding how it is that people make sense out of their work in the educational setting. How do students and teachers attribute meaning to their experiences as learners and workers within the school organization? What are their attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and opinions? What are the administrators' beliefs about management, authority, empowerment, and control? What are the students' perceptions about the classroom environment? All of these factors - long overlooked in the old paradigm - are important to a close, critical evaluation of what it is we are about in our nation's schools (Sirotnik, p. 46).

One dimensional versus three dimensional. Holly and Hopkins (1988) contend that evaluation must be used for and as school development, in addition to of school development. Evaluation of school improvement is usually the measurement of achievement of stated objectives in the so-called Tylerian tradition. Such evaluation products have tended to be quantitative and statistical in nature. Evaluation for school improvement is formative in that it brings about improvement in practice. The primary focus of this dimension of evaluation is on facilitating change even though the practice is not a change process in and of itself. Evaluation as school improvement occurs best when the evaluation has an explicit school improvement purpose and the role of the evaluator and practitioner are closely linked. Holly suggests that one dimension is not better than another, but that each level builds upon the other. In other words, the goal should not be the selection of

the better incomplete option, but the embracing of several options which, when combined, form a whole.

Teaching versus learning. Peter Senge in The Fifth Discipline (1991) identifies two fundamental sources of energy which can motivate an organization: fear and aspiration. Fear can produce extraordinary changes in short periods, but aspiration endures as a continuing source of learning and growth. Fear was the energy contained in the old evaluation paradigm while aspiration is the basis of the new. Deming suggests that "driving out all fear" is a principle for producing quality.

To summarize this paradigm comparison, I would suggest that the metaphor for the old paradigm is teaching while the metaphor for the new paradigm is learning; learning for the adults as well as the students in the transformational school setting. The transformational organization is a learning organization; an organization which seeks continuous improvement, continuous development, continuous growth sparked by continuous reflection on performance, process, and product.

Dilemmas of Shifting to the New Evaluation Paradigm

At its origin, the principle objective of the NEA-National Center for Innovation was to lead the movement to reform public education and restructure the public schools. Consistent with pursuit of that objective, the purpose of the Learning Laboratory Initiative (a district-level restructuring project) was to spotlight, support, and learn about school district and employee association restructuring efforts to improve learning opportunities for students. Learning Labs sprung from a growing realization that "the health of the industry" is a legitimate concern, even an obligation, of any union. In pursuit of its purpose, the Learning Lab Task Force's ad hoc committee on evaluation listed four general goals for the evaluation of the effort: (1) empowering stakeholders, (2) supporting the work, (3) showcasing what is being learned, and (4) informing policy development.

In order to facilitate the evaluation work of the NEA-National Center for Innovation project sites, the Center has assigned one staff member the responsibility of assisting the site evaluation coordinators (Appendix B) with the evaluation work and also utilizes the outside consultation and facilitation assistance of Peter Holly. Local coordinators have participated in various training opportunities on evaluation, in general, and action research, in particular, at national conferences and workshops led primarily by project consultant Peter Holly of the Gheens Professional Development Academy in Louisville, Kentucky.

In conjunction with his work with the Center, Holly designed "Quartiles of Collaborative Inquiry" (Appendix C), a grid which assists project sites in gathering a balanced, more fulsome evaluation of their various programs. The vertical axis of the grid indicates the purpose of the evaluation - either formative or summative. The horizontal axis shows whether an internal or external perspective is being considered. The two by two grid produces four combinations which are required for a balanced and complete evaluation: internal formative, internal summative, external formative, and external summative. Various research and data collection activities such as action research or surveys might be categorized differently depending upon the research question and/or the persons involved in the process. This graphic representation has been helpful to the participants of the Center projects in expanding their way of thinking, or paradigm, about what counts as evaluation and who is qualified to be evaluator.

Expectations. Teachers (like all of us) have learned to expect, accept, and value quantifiable, short-term evaluations as measures of success for students and programs while the changes being implemented in their schools and districts seek qualitative, long-term results. Teachers, too, believe the real evaluations are of outcomes and products rather than of the processes, which are essential elements of restructuring. Both unlearning and relearning have to take place. All have to

redefine or at least expand our definition of success, for students and programs. Yet while attempting to redefine what evaluation should be, state and local mandates and policies demand we continue to comply with old paradigm expectations.

Past experiences. Practitioners have vivid memories of unpleasant quartile four type (external summative) experiences with evaluation. Almost all teachers have had value judgements (blame fixing) placed upon their teaching methods by external observers. These personnel appraisal observations produce high anxiety for teachers and little professional growth. The appraisals create a competitive situation among professionals and stimulates little or no change in the delivery of instruction.

This familiar evaluation practice creates competition among professionals and stimulates little or no change in the delivery of instruction because it does not provide helpful feedback and because it is not considered a valid measure of teacher competence by the teachers themselves. These personnel appraisals create a large portion of the "baggage" teachers associate with the term evaluation.

More evaluation baggage, which teachers must unpack before operating in a new paradigm, stems from the widespread acceptance of standardized tests as the reliable measure of student achievement, and student achievement being the determinant of teacher, school, and district effectiveness. Few educators put much credence in these tests, yet continue to administer them due to state or district mandates to do so...it is a damaging avalanche that no one has the courage or ability to stop. Classtime spent in preparing for the tests and administering the tests is considerable in most schools, and teachers resent the instruction time which is displaced with this activity. I have heard some teachers lament, "The learning ends when the test begins." So student evaluation of this old paradigm nature creates resentment in teachers as well as students.

"Who" questions. Teachers, of course, are products of the system they serve. They come with the same mindsets concerning evaluation described in the first section of this paper. Even if the current evaluation system feels uncomfortable and inadequate, it is familiar and known. Replacing a known for an unknown is risky and frightening; and even more so if one moves from a passive to an active position in the transition. In the instant case it means teachers are moving from "evaluated" to "evaluator."

Teachers are fearful of doing evaluation work. They have been led to believe that only very specially trained external personnel are qualified to "make unbiased assessments" regarding the worth and success of their programs. After being convinced that they indeed were the appropriate ones to evaluate their initiatives, other questions arise due to teachers' lack of exposure to and experience with the language and professional skills associated with evaluation.

"How" questions. In my interaction with project evaluation coordinators, the first and most numerous questions asked by these novice evaluators are how questions. "How" questions center around skills and access; access to research and materials as well as human resources - people considered "experts" by the practitioners. How do you decide what to focus on? How do you collect relevant data? How do you analyze the data in a meaningful way? How do you report the results? Seeking answers to these questions continues to receive attention at Center-sponsored meetings and conferences. The electronic network available to Center project sites has not been utilized for dialogue around the "how-to's" of evaluation. The reasons for that may be varied and complex: perhaps evaluation remains a low priority among most practitioners, perhaps the people responsible for evaluation activities do not have easy access to the technology, or perhaps it could be that practitioners are uncomfortable with their evaluation skill level and therefore do not feel comfortable discussing the issues "publicly"

"When" questions. Teachers in transformational systems are participating in many new processes as result of site-based, shared decision making: problem identification and prioritization, conflict resolution, consensus building, teaming, and leadership are a few of the many. In addition to all those new activities, a growing number of teachers realize it is of critical importance for them to evaluate the processes and programs they implement. Teachers now participate in the collecting, analyzing, recording and reporting of data in meaningful ways to a widely defined circle of shareholders. These things take time...time to learn the skills of evaluation and time to actually perform the work of evaluation.

Another time demand is imposed by the need to bring theory and practice together to inform the decisions being made at the site level. In order to facilitate this phase of school improvement work, the Center established and supports an interactive computer network which links practitioners with researchers in dialogue around the key issues of school renewal. For teachers to take full advantage of this networking opportunity requires time and acquisition of new technical skills. Access to educational research which serves to inform and guide the innovations and the subsequent evaluations is problematic for teachers. Those teachers who do have ready access through an ERIC service or a local university library, find the time away from classroom instruction to be problematic.

The "when" question, finding and creating time to take advantage of opportunities and accept new responsibilities, is a dilemma more fully discussed by my colleagues from the Center in another paper of this symposium. As their study suggests, the only viable answer to the dilemma of time is the redefinition of teachers' work. As long as evaluation and research and networking are considered extra things to do beyond the real work of teachers, restructuring will not go far. Until the systemic changes happen (such as job redefinition) we are tinkering with rather than transforming our nations schools. To use the quality movement in

business as a reference, most have found that doing what is necessary to do it right the first time is slower at the onset, but certainly more efficient over all. Time, then, becomes an investment in the future of the total organization.

The "why" question. After the who, how, and when questions are addressed, the all-important, philosophical question arises...why? Why should we do our own evaluation work? There is so much happening, so much to learn, so much to do; why can't evaluation be one area that we can postpone learning about and doing until a later time? Why can't we just get a consultant or our district office personnel or the NEA to come do this for us? Why do evaluation anyway?

Deming proposes that "constant improvement (whether personal or organizational) is based on constant self-evaluation." The only thing that leads to quality is self-evaluation. William Glasser (1991) continues in this vein by suggesting that:

> Quality schools, beginning in kindergarten, ask students to evaluate their performance in class, on assignments, on tests - everything. Most of our teaching will be teaching students how to evaluate. In life it is your own evaluation of your own work that counts, not what someone else thinks. We're struggling with a system of how people behave because of a stimulus-response theory which is wrong. You can't make people do anything of quality if you threaten, bribe, or reward. And, in the end, quality is the only thing that we should value anyway.

Conclusion

It is no longer sufficient for evaluation to consist solely of quantitative measures, although those measures may be useful as one window through which to view the total schooling picture. The newly emerging educational evaluation paradigm is not about right answers, it is about right questions and about critical inquiry (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Kincheloe, 1991). It is about teachers becoming

learners alongside their students, as well as beside administrators, parents, and community-at-large (Barth, 1990).

Evaluation, in the new paradigm, is part-and-parcel of school renewal or transformation. Evaluation for development purposes helps transform schools into true learning organizations as defined by Senge (1991): places where "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (p. 3). Teachers and local shareholders engaged in creating, designing, implementing, and evaluating their educational vision is actually an enactment of three of Senge's five disciplines - shared vision, personal mastery, and team learning.

The new evaluation process includes self-examination and self-assessment, skills necessary for building a society of lifelong learners. Personal growth and learning as Senge suggests is, "approaching one's life as a creative work, living life from a creative as opposed to reactive viewpoint."

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APPENDIX A

* A COMPARISON OF EVALUATION PARADIGMS

"Old" Paradigm	"New" Paradigm
teacher as passive recipients/objects	teacher as active participants/subjects/partners
R, D, & D	collaborative inquiry
competitive	cooperative, collaborative
externally controlled	internally controlled
external change agents, developers, improvers, innovators, evaluators	internal change agents, developers, improvers, innovators, evaluators
external accountability	internal accountability
added-on	built-in
avoids the complexity of the school's culture	springs from within the school's culture
evaluation "of" (one dimension)	evaluation "as, for, of" (three dimensions)
linear	cyclical
singular reality	multiple realities
fragmented	interrelated
reactive	reflective, responsive
contrived	realistic
values uniformity	values diversity
compliance-driven	generative-driven
motivated by fear	motivated by aspiration
restrictive	liberating
quantitative/short-term	qualitative/long-term
win/lose	win/win
Metaphor: Teaching	Metaphor: Learning

*Expanded from Holly, 1990, p. 20.

APPENDIX B

Roles and Responsibilities of the

EVALUATION COORDINATOR

Role:

1. Lead the project in researching/documenting/evaluating/developing its identified restructuring initiatives.

2. Facilitate the sharing of the project's activities and learnings with the **NEA-NATIONAL CENTER FOR INNOVATION** and other project sites.

3. Serve as liaison between the **CENTER** and the project for issues that pertain to evaluation (e.g. action research, Rapporteuring).

Responsibilities:

1. Raise awareness among a broad-base of stakeholders within the project that research, evaluation, and dissemination is an expectation for partnership with the **NATIONAL CENTER FOR INNOVATION** as we strongly feel these activities are an integral part of enduring, systemic school restructuring and are benficial to the individual project and to the educational community at-large.

2. Lead in the project's efforts at formative and summative research, evaluation, development, and dissemination of the learnings.

3. Oversee the collection and maintenance of documentation regarding the progress of their project; and make this information available to the **NEA-NATIONAL CENTER FOR INNOVATION.**

4. Organize collaborative reflection and dialogue around the data accumulated from the efforts described above, and encourage local action based upon that data.

5. Engage in dialogue around the above issues on the **School Renewal Network** (in the Restructuring conference, the Site Evaluation session). Monitor, facilitate, and share information from the **Network** with others, and encourage others to actively participate in this vitally beneficial information exchange.

APPENDIX C

QUARTILES OF COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY:

Mapping Your Progress

(Document the evaluation activities of your project according to the coordinate labels.)